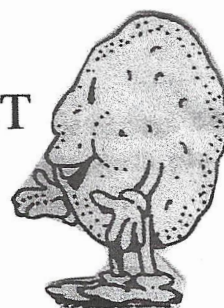
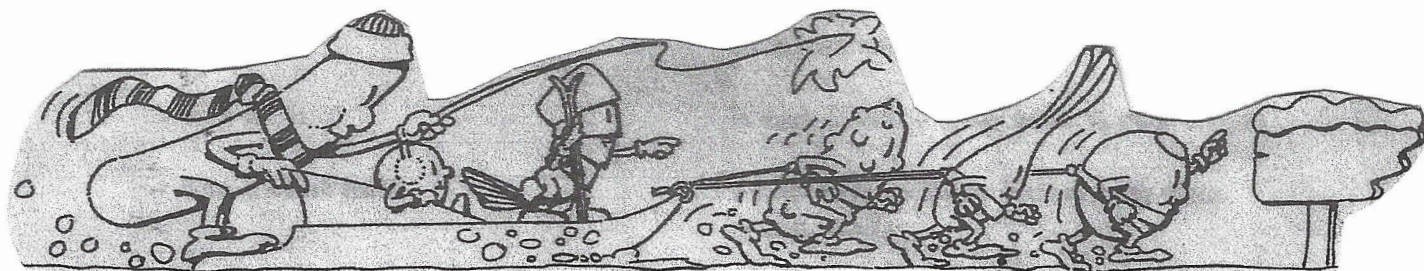


MEDITERRANEAN DIET



Written by Ida Lee Knapp
In 2018



MEDITERRANEAN DIET

Before we look at the Mediterranean Diet let us look at some history about the area. The Mediterranean diet has its origins in a position of land considered unique in its kind, the Mediterranean basin, which historians call “the cradle of society,” because within its geographical borders the whole history of the ancient world took place. You have the Nile, Tigris and Euphrates River and people from the Sumerians, Assyrian, Babylonians, Persians, Cretans, Phoenicians, learned Greeks and Romans. You have all these cultures, customs, languages, religions, different lifestyles and eating habits in this area.

A new study of ancient Greek texts revealed that the Mediterranean diet may have been conceived by early doctors as a form of medicinal treatment. One of these doctors was Galen, born in 129 A.D. He relied heavily on preventative medicine as a method of treatment. He was the physician to several emperors. He saw nutrition as the equal of pharmacology in maintenance of good health over an individual's lifespan. Hippocratic Greek doctors like Galen emphasized a need for simple, flavorful food to their patients.

Although some recognizable elements of today's Mediterranean cuisine were not yet introduced to Greece, Galen and other Hippocratic doctors laid much of the structural foundation for how the diet is still applied nearly 2,000 years later. Sweet and fatty foods in high quantities were discouraged then as they are today. Meat was not always readily available, which gave rise to a movement towards more plant-based meals.

In 1952, Dr. Ancel Keys discovered the Mediterranean Diet and introduced it to the United States, but it wasn't until the 1990's that it became popular.

Dr. Keys built a career that changed the thinking on many aspects of physiology and health, including the effects of starvation and the factors responsible for the most devastating epidemic in the industrialized world, coronary heart disease. He did a “Seven Countries Study”, which began in 1958 and lasted until the 1970's. This study involved 12,000 healthy middle-aged men living in Italy, the Greek Islands, Yugoslavia, Netherlands, Finland, Japan and the United States. There were high correlations between the amount of saturated fat and cholesterol in the diet of the people, their cholesterol levels and its percentage of death from cardiovascular diseases. Of these seven nations, the United States and Finland had the highest animal product consumption, the highest saturated fat intake, the highest cholesterol consumption and the highest percentage of death from cardiovascular diseases.

In “The Seven Countries Study” one of the most important discoveries was that the inhabitants of Crete, who obtained more from 40% of their calories from fat consumption, displayed the lowest cholesterol index and associated diseases. In the Greek Island, the percentage of deaths for this reason was 57 times lower than in Finland. (Tidbit about Dr. Keys he developed the K rations for the military.) In 1993, the Oldways organization, the Harvard School of Public Health and the World Health Organization introduced the concept of the **Mediterranean Diet**, in a conference in Cambridge, Massachusetts and defined it as “a delicious, pleasurable and very healthful way to eat”. Oldways created the **Mediterranean Diet Pyramid**.

The Mediterranean diet is a way of eating rather than a formal diet plan. It features foods eaten in the 16 countries that border the Mediterranean Sea, which is why there are different varieties of the Mediterranean diet.

Here is a summary of the characteristics of the Traditional Mediterranean Diet: grains, vegetables and fruits should be eaten at most meals, because they are important sources of

vitamins, minerals, energy, antioxidants and fiber. **Grains**; the majority of grains should be whole grains, such as wheat, oats, rice, rye, barley and corn. These grains are best consumed in whole, minimally-processed forms, because refining and processing can remove many valuable nutrients, including vitamins, minerals and fiber. **Vegetables** are an important staple of eating patterns of the people of the Mediterranean area and provide valuable nutrients. They are cooked and drizzled with olive oil or eaten raw. **Fruits** are ever-present in this diet. No-sugar-added fruit juices provide only some of the same nutrition benefits as whole fruit and attention to portion control and total calories is wise. Fruit “drinks” do not have the benefit of fruit juice. **Olives and olive oil** are central to the Mediterranean diet. Olives are universally eaten whole and widely used for cooking and flavoring. Olive oil is the principal source of dietary fat used for cooking, baking and for dressing salads and vegetables. Extra virgin olive oil is highest in health-promoting fats, phytonutrients and other important micronutrients. You can also use avocado oil. Buy mayonnaise made with canola oil. **Nuts, beans, legumes and seeds** are good sources of healthy fats, protein and fiber. They add flavor and texture to the diet. **Herbs and spices** add flavors and aromas to foods, reducing the need to add salt or fat when cooking. **Cheese and yogurt** are eaten regularly in the traditional Mediterranean diet, but in low to moderate amounts. Low fat and nonfat dairy products ease concerns of adverse consequences of somewhat higher consumption of dairy products. Calcium is important for bone and heart health. **Fish and shellfish** are important sources of healthy protein. Fish has essential heart healthy omega-3 fatty acids. The Mediterranean countries don’t typically batter or fry their fish. **Eggs** are a good source of high-quality protein and can be especially beneficial for people that do not eat meat. Eggs are regularly used in baking in Mediterranean countries. **Meats** are eaten in small portions of lean cuts. Poultry is a good source of lean protein without the high levels of saturated fat found in some cuts of red meat. With ground meats, 90% lean 10% fat is a sound choice. **Sweets** are consumed in small portions. Fruits are eaten for sweets. Gelato and sorbet are consumed a few times a week, in small portions. **Wine** is consumed regularly but moderately, unless discouraged by religious beliefs. “Moderately” means up to 1 5-oz glass of wine per day for women and up to 2 5-oz. glasses for men. **Water** is essential for life and proper hydration during each day. Individual variations in body sizes, metabolic rates and activity levels mean that some people should drink more water every day than others. **Portion size**, foods in the bottom section of the pyramid may be eaten in larger amounts and more frequently. The pyramid’s upper sections portion sizes and frequency of consumption are smaller. **Healthy lifestyle habits** like daily physical activity are important for overall good health. This includes strenuous exercise like running and aerobics, as well as more leisurely activities such as walking and housework or yard-work or taking the stairs instead of the elevator. **Meals in the company of others** are what make the meal enjoyable. **The Mediterranean Diet Pyramid** is reliable for most adults. However, children and pregnant women and others with special dietary needs may require dietary supplementation.

Why is olive oil included in the Mediterranean Diet? Olives are an ancient food and olive trees have been growing around the Mediterranean region since about 3,000 B.C. Olive oil is high in compounds called phenols, which are potent antioxidants capable of lowering inflammation and fighting free radical damage. Olive oil is mainly made up of monounsaturated fatty acid, the most important of which is called oleic acid. Oleic acid is known to be extremely heart-healthy in numerous ways, especially when compared to many other refined vegetables oils, trans-fats or hydrogenated fats.

Not all olive oil is created equally. There are imitations and inferior products. A lot of this imitation olive oil isn't always harvested or processed properly, which can kill many of their delicate nutrients and turn some of their fatty acids rancid or toxic. Look on the labels that indicate your oil is "extra-virgin" and ideally cold-pressed. Cold-pressed or expeller-pressed oil hasn't been refined so it holds all of its natural vitamins, essential fatty acids, antioxidants and other nutrients better. Unrefined oil is separated without high heat, hot water, solvents and left unfiltered. The olive oil that is not cold-pressed or expeller-pressed is heated to a high degree, which reduces their benefits.

The pros of the Mediterranean Diet are; it offers varied flavors and food options and covers all major food groups; low in saturated fats (most of the fats in this diet are monounsaturated or "good" fats); it's heart healthy and is a diet that you can stay with for a lifetime. It also has a lower sodium intake due to the reduction of processed foods.

The cons of the Mediterranean Diet are: some of these diets don't include milk or dairy products other than cheese, yogurt and Greek yogurt. Because of this pay attention to your calcium levels. Some vegetables are a good source of calcium. If you really like milk add skim milk to your diet; you may have lower levels of iron so eat foods rich in iron and vitamin C, which helps your body absorb iron; red wine is part of the diet, consumption of wine may not be advisable for people taking certain medications and those with elevated triglycerides or who have pancreatitis; this diet does not state exact servings amounts per day, but rather lists total amount of macronutrient distribution, which is confusing for people. For example, the diet uses words such as "low to moderate intake", "abundance" and "often", which doesn't give exact amount.

Calorie totals and physical activity parameters are not stated, so those who are looking for specific measurements are at a loss; put a cap on fat because getting too much of a good thing, even healthy fats, isn't good; even with the health benefits of seafood, nearly all fish and shellfish contains traces of pollutants, including toxic metal mercury. There is more mercury and other pollutants in the larger fish, like shark, swordfish, tilefish and mackerel. Most adults can safely eat about 12 oz. (2 6-oz servings) of other types of cooked seafood a week. For women who are pregnant, nursing mothers and children aged 12 and younger, choose fish and shellfish that are lower in mercury, such as shrimp, canned light tuna, salmon, Pollack or catfish. Because of its higher mercury content eat no more than 6-oz (one average meal) of albacore tuna per week.

Try to consume an average of at least 1 gram of omega-3 fatty acids per day. Omega-3s are a type of fat that provide a number of cardiovascular benefits. Here is a list of foods that have omega-3 in them: **Fish** (3-ounce cooked portion), Pickled Herring, 1.2 grams; Salmon, 1.1 grams; Mackerel, 1.0 grams; Trout, 0.5-1.7 grams; Canned tuna white, canned in water, 0.7 grams; Canned tuna light, canned in water, 0.2 grams; Halibut, 0.4 grams, Shrimp, 0.3; Cod, 0.3 grams **Oils** (1 Tablespoon) Flaxseed oil, 7.0 grams; Walnut oil, 1.4 grams; Canola oil, 1.3 grams; Canola oil mayonnaise, 1.0 grams; Olive oil, 0.1 grams **Nuts & Seeds** (1 ounce) Flaxseed, ground – 1 Tablespoon, 2.0 grams; Walnuts, English, 1.9 grams; Walnuts, Black, 0.9 grams **Beans** Soybeans, boiled (1 cup), 1.0 grams; Tofu, regular (1/2 cup), .04 grams

Flaxseeds can be found at many bulk food and health food stores. Ground flaxseed provides more nutritional benefits than whole seed. Grind flaxseeds at home using a coffee grinder, food processor or blender. You can store whole flaxseeds at room temperature for up to a year but to keep best flavor & taste it's best to grind whole flaxseeds as you need them. After

grinding, refrigerate in an airtight, opaque container. Ground flaxseed handled this way will keep for up to 90 days.

Sample Menu List for Seven Days

Day One

Breakfast: 1 cup cooked oatmeal, ½ cup sliced strawberries, 1 cup Skim Milk

Morning Snack: 8 oz. low-fat yogurt, 2 Tablespoon Flaxseed, ground

Lunch: 1½ cups Split Pea Chowder (page 6), 2 cups chopped salad (page 11), 1 Sliced tomato, 1 slice Whole grain garlic toast (page 6)

Afternoon Snack: 1 oz. (1/4 cup) Almonds, 1 Pear

Dinner: 4 oz. Baked Salmon, 1 cup Herb & Garlic Potatoes (page 7), 1 cup Garden Vegetable Medley (page 7)

Day Two

Breakfast: ¾ cup Flax Cereal or Multigrain Cereal, 1 cup Skim Milk, ½ cup Blueberries

Morning Snack: 8 oz. low-fat yogurt, ½ cup Strawberries

Lunch: 2 cups Bean Soup (page 7), 5 whole grain low fat crackers, 1 cup tossed salad (pages 7 & 8), 1 oz. (1/3 cup) chopped pecans

Dinner: 1 serving Chicken Fajita Bowl (page 8)

Evening Snack: 1/3 cup dry roasted peanuts, without salt

Day Three

Breakfast: 1 cup cooked oatmeal, 2 Tablespoons chopped walnuts or ground flaxseeds, 1 cup Skim Milk, 1 banana

Morning Snack: 1/3 cup almonds

Lunch: 1 serving Chicken salad with Vinaigrette (page 8), 1 whole wheat roll, 1 teaspoon Canola margarine

Afternoon Snack: 1 sliced kiwi

Dinner: 1 cup cooked penne or other small shaped pasta, 1 cup Black Bean Marinara Sauce (pages 8 & 9), ½ cup steamed spinach (page 9), 1 cup raw carrots, 1 teaspoon Canola margarine

Evening Snack: 6 oz. nonfat yogurt, ½ cup frozen thawed blueberries

Day Four

Breakfast: 1 Spanish-Style Frittata (page 9), 1 slice whole wheat toast, 1 teaspoon Canola margarine, 1 cup fresh melon, 1 cup Skim Milk

Morning Snack: 1 orange, 14 (1oz.) walnut halves

Lunch: 1 Turkey sandwich (page 9), 1 cup tossed salad (pages 7 & 8), 1 apple

Afternoon Snack: 1 pear

Dinner: 2 cups Spinach stir-fry (pages 9 & 10), 1 cup brown rice

Evening Snack: 1 cup Strawberry Smoothie (page 10), add 2 tablespoons wheat germ or ground flaxseeds

Day Five

Breakfast: 1 cup Wheatena or other whole grain hot cereal (follow box directions & omit salt) – top with: 1 cup Skim Milk, 2 Tablespoons walnuts, chopped, ½ grapefruit

Morning Snack: 8 oz. low-fat yogurt, 2 Tablespoons wheat germ

Lunch: 1 Dagwood Veggie Burger (page 10), 1 cup carrot sticks

Dinner: 1 ½ cups Mexican Minestrone (page 10), 2 cups chopped salad (pages 10 & 11), 1 whole wheat roll, 1 teaspoon Canola margarine, 1 cup spiced Winter Squash (page 11)

Evening Snack: Fruit Salad (page 11)

Day Six

Breakfast: Vegetable Omelet (page 11), 1 sliced whole grain toast, 1 teaspoon Canola Margarine, 1 cup Skim Milk

Morning Snack: 1 Pear

Lunch: 1 Tuna Sandwich (page 11), 1 cup tossed salad (page 7 & 8)

Afternoon Snack: 1 Orange, 1 oz. Low-Fat String Cheese

Dinner: 1 6 oz. Salmon steak broiled, 1 cup Broccoli, steamed, 1 small Whole Grain Roll, 1 cup tossed salad (page 7 & 8)

Evening Snack: 1 Baked Apple

Day Seven

Breakfast: 1 Whole Grain Muffin (pages 11 & 12), 1 cup Skim Milk, 1 Orange

Morning Snack: 14 halves (1oz.) Walnuts

Lunch: 1 serving Easy Salmon Salad (page 12), 1 Whole Wheat Roll, 1 teaspoon Canola margarine, 1 Pear

Afternoon Snack: 1 Whole grain WASA crackers or other whole grain crackers, 2 Tablespoon unsalted old-fashioned peanut butter

Dinner: 1 cup Vegetarian Chili Pot (page 12), 2 Tablespoon Nonfat sour cream, 1 cup Easy Slaw (page 12)

Evening Snack: 1 cup Peach Smoothie (page 12)

Recipes**Slow Cooker Mediterranean Chicken**

1/3 cup white wine

2 tablespoons brown sugar

1½ teaspoon dried oregano

3 tablespoon red wine vinegar

Salt & pepper

6 garlic cloves, smashed

1 tablespoon capers

½ cup prunes

1/3 cup pitted green olives

4 small chicken legs and 4 thighs (about 2 ½ pounds)

¼ cup fresh flat-leaf parsley, chopped

1 cup long grain white rice

To a 5-6 quart slow cooker, add wine, brown sugar, oregano, vinegar, ¼ teaspoon salt and pepper; whisk together. Add garlic, capers, prunes and olives; mix. Add chicken, nestling it among olives and prunes. Cover slow cooker with lid and cook on low 5 to 6 hours or on high 3 to 4 hours. Gently stir in parsley. Thirty minutes before serving, cook rice according to package directions. Serve chicken, prunes, olives and sauce over rice. Serves 4.

Zucchini Noodles with Marinara Sauce

2-4 large tomatoes, seeded and chopped

1 red bell pepper

1 cup sun-dried tomatoes

1 teaspoon honey

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

2 cloves garlic, crushed

¾ teaspoon sea salt

Pinch of cayenne pepper

2 tablespoons minced fresh basil

2 tablespoons minced fresh oregano

6 medium green zucchini (peeling optional)

Put all ingredients (except olive oil and zucchini) in food processor and blend to chunky or smooth. Put into bowl and mix in olive oil. Transform zucchini into noodles using a spiral slicer. Toss noodles with enough marinara sauce to coat well and serve immediately. Serves 4-6

Split Pea Chowder

1 14-ounce bag dry split peas, sorted and rinsed

1 onion, chopped

1 potato, washed & chopped

3 carrots, peeled & chopped

2 cups low-fat chicken broth

8 cups cold water

1 teaspoon each: thyme, oregano, black pepper

1 bay leaf

Place all ingredients together in a large soup pot. Bring to a boil over high heat then reduce to a low simmer. Cook until peas and veggies are tender, about 1 ½ hours. Remove bay leaf and season with black pepper. Adjust the consistency at the end with more water if needed. Serve hot. Crock pot instructions: Reduce the amount of water to 7 cups. Place all ingredients together in a crock pot and turn heat on high. Cook until peas and veggies are tender, about 4 hours, stirring occasionally. Serve hot. Serves eight. You may freeze leftovers.

Whole grain garlic toast

1 slice whole wheat bread

Canola oil cooking spray

½ teaspoon minced garlic

Sprinkle each of dried oregano, thyme

1 teaspoon parmesan cheese

Preheat oven or toaster over to broil. Place oven rack about 4 to 6 inches from top oven coil. Lightly spray whole grain bread with oil; top with the rest of the ingredients. Broil until lightly golden, about 4 minutes.

Herb & Garlic Roasted Potatoes

8 medium-sized red potatoes (1 pound) cut into chunks

1 teaspoon olive oil

3 garlic cloves, minced

1 teaspoon fresh chopped rosemary

½ teaspoon thyme

Pinch of black pepper

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Toss the potatoes with the rest of the ingredients in a medium-size bowl. Place in a large roasting pan and cover with foil. Roast until potatoes are very tender, about 45 minutes. Serves 4.

Garden Vegetable Medley

¼ cup sliced zucchini

½ cup sliced carrots

½ cup chopped onion

½ teaspoon minced garlic

2 teaspoon honey

½ tablespoon stone ground mustard

½ tablespoon red wine vinegar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place vegetables in small ceramic baking dish. Mix the garlic, honey, mustard and vinegar in a small mixing bowl. Drizzle the mixture over the veggies. Cover the dish with foil and place in the oven; bake for 15 minutes or until the veggies are tender. Stir and serve hot. Serves 1

Bean Soup

1 pound mixed beans, soaked overnight, rinsed and drained (or use canned beans)

6 cups beef or vegetable broth

2 carrots, peeled & chopped

1 medium onion, chopped

1 tablespoon canola or olive oil

1 large can (28 ounces) whole tomatoes

2 cloves garlic, minced or pressed through a garlic press

½ teaspoon thyme

½ bay leaf

¼ teaspoon hot red pepper flakes

Salt and pepper to taste

Dice carrots and onions and sauté in the oil in a soup pot on medium high until slightly brown and caramelized (about ten minutes). Add beans, tomatoes, broth and seasonings. Simmer for three hours or more. (Two hours if using canned beans). Serves 7.

Tossed Salad

1 cup romaine lettuce, washed, dried and chopped (or use ready to serve from the bag)

½ cup cucumber, diced

¼ cup diced green or red onion

¼ cup sliced carrots

Dressing

1 teaspoon olive or canola oil

2 tablespoon flavored vinegar

Fresh cracked pepper to taste

Pinch dried oregano

Combine all ingredients in a medium-sized mixing bowl and mix well. Serve immediately or chill up to 1 hour before eating. Serves one.

Chicken Fajita Bowl

3 cups cooked brown rice

1 teaspoon canola oil

½ onion, cut in strips

1 cup sliced green pepper strips

1 clove garlic, minced

8 ounces boneless skinless chicken, cut in strips

1 cup cooked or canned kidney beans, drained

½ teaspoon chili powder

½ teaspoon ground cumin

½ teaspoon dried oregano leaves

Garnish with 1 cup nonfat sour cream and 2 Tablespoon fresh chopped cilantro or culantro

Cook brown rice according to package directions, omit salt. For 3 cups of cooked rice you need 1 cup of rice and 2 cups of water. Place vegetable oil in bottom of a large nonstick skillet and heat over medium-high heat. Do not heat oil so hot it smokes. Add onion, green pepper and garlic and sauté until golden, about 2 minutes. Add the chicken strips, beans and seasonings; lower the heat to medium and cook until the chicken is done, about 8 minutes. Stir occasionally. Serve the fajita mixture over brown rice. Garnish with nonfat sour cream and chopped cilantro. Serves 4.

Chicken Salad with Vinaigrette

3 ounces roasted skinless chicken breast, cubed or cut into shreds

2 cups mixed salad greens

1 carrot, chopped

1 fresh tomato, chopped

½ small avocado, sliced

½ green or red pepper, chopped

Vinaigrette

1 teaspoon olive or canola oil

2 tablespoons flavored vinegar

Prepare salad and toss with vinaigrette.

Black Bean Marinara

1 teaspoon minced garlic

1 cup diced onion

1/3 cup water

1 tablespoon honey

1 tablespoon vinegar

1 15 ounce can black beans, drained and rinsed

1 8 ounce can no-salt-added tomato sauce

1 15 ounce can diced no-salt-added tomatoes

3 ounces tomato paste

½ teaspoon dried oregano

½ teaspoon dried marjoram

½ teaspoon dried basil

Generously spray a large nonstick skillet with cooking oil spray and heat over medium-high. Sauté the onion and garlic until golden, about 1 or 2 minutes. Add the rest of the ingredients and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to simmer and cook until the sauce is thick, about 4 minutes. Serve hot over cooked pasta, baked potatoes or grilled fish. Serves 4.

Steamed Spinach

3 cups fresh spinach

¼ cup sliced green onion

¼ teaspoon olive oil

Black pepper to taste

Pinch nutmeg

Place all ingredients in microwave container. Cook until the spinach is thoroughly heated through. Stir well and serve hot.

Spanish-Style Frittata

½ onion, sliced

2 tomatoes, sliced

2 teaspoon garlic, minced

1 green pepper, sliced

Black pepper to taste

¼ teaspoon crushed dried rosemary

¼ teaspoon thyme

1 teaspoon olive or canola oil

2 cups egg substitute

Preheat broiler. Spread the onion, tomatoes, garlic and green pepper on a large cookie tray so they are in a thin layer. Broil until they are golden brown, about 10 minutes. Remove from the oven, drain off excess juice and add the seasonings. Meanwhile, spray in a large non-stick skillet with olive oil and heat over medium-high heat. Scramble the egg substitute until cooked. Serve with broiled vegetables over top. Serves 4.

Turkey Sandwich

3 ounces sliced skinless roasted turkey breast

1 tablespoon canola mayonnaise

1 large slice lettuce

1 large slice tomato

2 slices whole wheat bread

Spinach Stir-Fry

1 cup cooked brown rice

1½ cups ready-to-serve fresh spinach

½ teaspoon minced garlic

½ teaspoon grated ginger

1 cup frozen stir-fry vegetables

½ tablespoon light soy sauce

2 tsp. canola oil

Pinch cayenne pepper

Place the spinach leaves and cooked brown rice in a large bowl. Generously spray a large nonstick skillet with cooking oil spray and heat over medium-high heat. Sauté the garlic and ginger until golden, about 1 minute. Add the frozen stir fry vegetables and sauté until tender

and heated through, about 4 minutes. Season with soy sauce, canola oil and cayenne pepper. Remove from heat and toss with the fresh spinach leaves and rice. Stir well and serve hot.

Serves 1.

Strawberry Smoothie

- ½ cup frozen or fresh strawberries
- ¾ cup vanilla-flavored nonfat yogurt
- ¼ cup skim or soymilk
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

Combine all ingredients in a blender and puree until smooth. Serve immediately. Serves 1

Dagwood Veggie Burger

- 1 vegetarian burger patty
- 1 wheat burger bun
- No-salt-added catsup
- 1 tablespoon canola oil mayonnaise
- 1 large slice tomato
- 1 large slice onion
- ¼ avocado, sliced
- ¼ cup shredded lettuce

Microwave burger patty on full power until heated through, about 1 minute. Toast burger bun if desired. Assemble burger by placing burger patty and the rest of the ingredients on the bun.

Mexican Minestrone

- 3 tablespoon macaroni noodles
- ½ cup low-sodium broth
- ½ cup water
- ½ cup kidney beans, rinsed
- ¼ cup corn kernels
- ½ cup mixed veggies
- ¼ teaspoon chili powder
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon oregano
- ¼ teaspoon cumin

Place all ingredients in a medium-sized sauce pan and bring to a boil. Lower heat to a simmer and cook until the macaroni and veggies are tender, about 10 minutes. Stir occasionally.

Serve hot. Microwave directions: place all ingredients in a medium-size microwave container; cook on full power until macaroni and veggies are tender, stirring occasionally.

Serve hot. Serves 1

Chopped Salad

- 2 teaspoon canola or olive oil
- 2 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- ½ tablespoon grated parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup green bell peppers
- ¼ cup cooked garbanzo beans, drained
- ¼ cup shredded romaine lettuce
- ¼ cup shredded cabbage
- ¼ cup green onions, sliced
- 1 radish, sliced

Mix all ingredients together in a medium-size mixing bowl.

Spiced Winter Squash

1 12 ounce box frozen winter squash

Pinch each: cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves

¼ cup reduced calorie syrup

Microwave winter squash on full power until heated through, about 10-12 minutes. Add spices and reduced calorie syrup. Stir and serve hot.

Serves 2

Fruit Salad

1 cup mixed chopped fresh fruit, e.g. orange, melon, berries, bananas, apples, kiwi, pears, peaches, etc. 2 tablespoon orange juice from fresh orange or omit if using orange in above mixture. Combine all ingredients in a medium-sized mixing bowl and mix well. Serve immediately or chill up to 8 hours before eating.

Vegetable Omelet

½ cup zucchini

¼ cup onion

¼ cup green pepper

1 egg

2 egg whites

1 teaspoon canola oil

Heat ½ teaspoon canola oil in small nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onions, zucchini and bell peppers; sauté for 7 minutes or until tender. Remove from heat and set aside. Combine the egg whites and egg in a medium bowl; stir well with a wire whisk. Heat ½ teaspoon canola oil in a small nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add ½ of vegetable mixture, spreading over bottom of skillet. Pour egg mixture into skillet and top with remainder of vegetable mixture (do not stir). Cover, reduce heat to medium-low and cook for 10 minutes or until the center is set. Loosen the omelet with a spatula and fold in half. Slide omelet onto plate.

Tuna Sandwich

2 slices whole wheat bread

3 ounces canned tuna, packed in water

2 tablespoon canola oil mayonnaise

1 large slice tomato

1 large slice lettuce

Whole Grain Muffin

½ cup oatmeal

1/3 cup oat bran

1 1/3 cups whole wheat flour

2/3 cup ground flaxseed

2 tablespoon all-purpose flour

2 tablespoon sugar

1 tablespoon baking powder

1/3 teaspoon baking soda

2 cups skim milk

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

½ cup applesauce

½ cup frozen blueberries

Preheat your oven to 375 degrees. Spray a nonstick muffin pan with cooking oil spray and line with paper muffin cups. Combine the dry ingredients in a medium-sized bowl. Place the liquid ingredients in a large bowl and mix well. Add the dry ingredients to the liquid ingredients and mix well. Fold in the blueberries last. Scoop batter into the muffin pan using a third cup measure. Bake immediately at 375 degrees until firm in the center, about 18-20 minutes. Remove pan from oven and turn muffins out onto rack to cool. Yields 1 dozen.

Easy Salmon Salad

7 ounce can pink salmon with bones, no salt

½ cup diced cucumber

3 tablespoon canola oil mayonnaise

¼ cup sliced green onion

2 cups dark green lettuce

2 tomatoes cut in wedges

Toss salmon, cucumber, mayonnaise and green onion together in a large mixing bowl.

Refrigerate until ready to serve, up to 6 hours. Make a bed of lettuce and serve the salmon salad in the middle, garnished with tomatoes.

Serves 2

Vegetarian Chili Pot

1 cup instant brown rice

1 can black beans, drained

1 can diced tomatoes, no-salt-added

1 cup water

3 tablespoon dried minced onion

½ teaspoon chili powder

½ teaspoon oregano

½ teaspoon cumin

Combine all ingredients in a medium-sized microwave container. Cover and microwave on high for 12 minutes. Stir and serve hot.

Serves 3

Easy Slaw

1 cup shredded cabbage (can use prepackaged shredded cabbage to save time)

2 tablespoon vanilla-flavored nonfat light yogurt

1 tablespoon flavored vinegar

½ teaspoon caraway, anise or fennel seeds, crushed

Combine all ingredients in a medium-sized mixing bowl and mix well. Serve immediately or chill up to 8 hours before eating.

Serves 1

Peach Smoothie

1 ¼ cups skim milk

2 tablespoons wheat germ

1 cup fresh or frozen peaches

Pinch cinnamon

Optional: NutraSweet or Equal

Place all items in a blender and blend until smooth.

Mediterranean Diet Pyramid: a lifestyle for today Guidelines for Adult population

Serving size based on frugality and local habits



© 2010 Fundación Dieta Mediterránea
The use and promotion of this pyramid is recommended without any restriction



RESOURCE

Mediterranean Diet Pyramid

<https://www.oldwayspt.org>

Medical News Today (Mediterranean Diet: Facts, health benefits & meal tips

Zucchini Noodles with Marinara Sauce Recipe <https://draxe.com>

LiveStrong.com Pros & Cons of the Mediterranean Diet

<https://www.everydayhealth.com/mediterraneandiet/guide/> Mediterranean Diet-Advantages, Concerns & Effects

<https://mayoclinichealthsystem.org> what's the big deal about the Mediterranean diet

Oldways – Why Traditional Diets?

The Mediterranean Diet: A History of Health

<https://www.helpguide.org> what you need to know about eating Mediterranean way

<https://medlineplus.gov>

<https://www.todaysdietitian.com>

<https://www.nytimes.com> Dr. Ancel Keys obituary

<https://www.mediterraneandiet.com>

<https://www.webmd.com>

<https://mediterraneandiet.com>

Importance of Olive Oil

Mediterranean Diet Pyramid: a lifestyle for today

Improve Heart Health from Pat Stancel from a class she took at Carnival of Learning

Paperwork from Cynthia Gibson

Thanks to Pat Stancel and Cynthia Gibson for the paperwork they sent me and Sue Larson for proof reading the lesson.

MEDITERRANEAN DIET

History

The Mediterranean diet has its origins in a position of land considered unique in its kind, the Mediterranean basin, which historians call "The cradle of society", because within its geographical borders the whole history of the ancient world took place. There is the Nile, Tigris and Euphrates River, and the people from the Sumerians, Assyrian, Babylonians, Persians, Cretans, Phoenicians, and the Greeks and Romans. From this we have all these cultures, customs, languages, religions different lifestyles and eating habits from these regions.

A new study of ancient Greek texts revealed that the Mediterranean diet may have been conceived by early doctors as a form of medicinal treatment. One of these doctors was Galen, born in 129 A.D. He relied heavily on preventative medicine as a method of treatment. He was the physician to several emperors. He saw nutrition as the equal of pharmacology in maintenance of good health over an individual's lifespan. Hippocratic Greek doctors like Galen emphasized a need for simple, flavorful food to their patients.

Although some recognizable elements of today's Mediterranean cuisine were not yet introduced to Greece, Galen and other Hippocratic doctors laid much of the structural foundation for how the diet is still applied nearly 2,000 years later. Sweet and fatty foods in high quantities were discouraged then as they are today. Meat was not always readily available, which gave rise to a movement towards more plant-based meals.

Today

In 1952, Dr Ancel Keys discovered the Mediterranean diet and introduced it to the United States, but it wasn't until the 1990s that it became popular.

Dr. Keys built a career that changed the thinking on many aspects of physiology and health, including the effects of starvation and the factors responsible for the most devastating epidemic in the industrialized world, coronary heart disease. He did a "Seven Countries Study", which began in 1958 and lasted until the 1970s. This study involved 12,000 healthy middle-aged men living in Italy, the Greek Islands, Yugoslavia, Netherlands, Finland, Japan, and the United States. There were high correlations between the amount of saturated fat and cholesterol in the diet of the people, their cholesterol levels and the percentage of death from cardiovascular diseases. Of these 7 nations, the United States and Finland had the highest animal product consumption, the highest saturated fat intake, the highest cholesterol consumption and the highest percentage of death from cardiovascular diseases.

In "The Seven Countries Study", one of the most important discoveries was that the inhabitants of Crete, who obtained more than 40% of their calories from fat consumption, displayed the lowest cholesterol index and associated diseases. On the Greek Island, the percentage of deaths for this reason was 57 times lower than Finland. In 1993, the Oldways organization, the Harvard School of Public Health and the World Health Organization introduced the concept of the Mediterranean Diet, in a conference in Cambridge, Massachusetts and defined it as "A delicious, pleasurable and very healthy way to eat". Oldways created the Mediterranean Diet Pyramid.

What is the Mediterranean Diet?

This diet is a way of eating rather than a formal diet plan. It features foods eaten in the 16 countries that border the Mediterranean Sea, which is why there are different varieties of the Mediterranean Diet.

Here is a summary of the characteristics of the traditional Mediterranean Diet:

Grains, vegetables and fruits should be eaten at most meals because they are important sources of vitamins, minerals, energy, antioxidants, and fiber.

Grains

The majority of grains should be whole grains such as wheat, oats, rice, rye, barley, and corn. These grains are best consumed in whole, minimally-processed forms because refining and processing can remove many valuable nutrients, including vitamins, minerals and fiber.

Vegetables

These are an important staple of eating patterns of the people of the Mediterranean area and provide valuable nutrients. They are cooked and drizzled with olive oil or eaten raw.

Fruits

Are ever present in this diet. No sugar-added fruit juices provide only some of the same nutrition benefits as whole fruit and attention to portion control and total calories is wise. Fruit “drinks” do not have the benefit of pure fruit juice.

Olives and Olive oil

Are central to the Mediterranean diet. Olives are universally eaten whole and widely used for cooking and flavoring. Olive oil is the principal source of dietary fat used for cooking, baking and for dressing salads and vegetables. Extra virgin olive oil is highest in health-promoting fats, phytonutrients and other important micronutrients. You can also use avocado oil. Why is olive oil included in the Mediterranean Diet? Olives are an ancient food and olive trees have been growing around the Mediterranean region since about 3,000 B.C. Olive oil is high in compounds called phenols, which are potent antioxidants capable of lowering inflammation and fighting free radical damage. Olive oil is mainly made up of monounsaturated fatty acid, the most important of which is called oleic acid. Oleic acid is known to be extremely heart-healthy in numerous ways, especially when compared to many other refined vegetable oils, trans-fats or hydrogenated fats. Not all olive oil is created equally. There are imitations and inferior products. A lot of imitation olive oil isn't always harvested or processed properly, which can kill many of their delicate nutrients and turn some of their fatty acids rancid or toxic. Look on the labels that indicate your oil is “Extra Virgin” and ideally cold-pressed. Cold-pressed or expeller-pressed oil hasn't been refined so it holds all of its natural vitamins, essential fatty-acids, antioxidants, and other nutrients better. Unrefined oil is separated without high heat, hot water, solvents, and left unfiltered. The olive oil that is not cold-pressed or expeller-pressed is heated to high degree, which reduces their benefits.

Nuts, Legumes, Beans, and Seeds

Are good sources of healthy fats, protein and fiber. They add flavor and texture to the diet.

Herbs and Spices

Add flavors and aromas to foods, reducing the need to add salt or fat when cooking.

Cheese and Yogurt

Are eaten regularly in the traditional Mediterranean diet, but in low to moderate amounts. Low fat and nonfat dairy products ease concerns of adverse consequences of somewhat higher consumption of dairy products. (check package ingredients as many varieties can contain sugar or equivalent). Calcium is important for bone and heart health.

Fish and Shellfish

Are important sources of healthy protein. Fish has essential heart healthy omega-3 fatty acids. The Mediterranean countries don't typically batter or fry their fish.

Eggs

Are a good source of high-quality protein and can be especially beneficial for people that do not eat meat. Eggs are regularly used in baking in Mediterranean countries.

Meats

Are eaten in small portions of lean cuts. Poultry is a good source of lean protein without the high levels of saturated fat found in some cuts of red meat. With ground meats, 90% lean 10% fat is a sound choice.

Sweets

Are consumed in small portions. Fruits are eaten for sweets. Gelato and sorbet are consumed a few times a week, in small portions.

Wine

Wine is consumed regularly but moderately, unless discouraged by religious beliefs. Moderately means up to 1 - 5oz. glass of wine per day for women and up to 2 – 5oz. glasses for men.

Water

Water is essential for life and proper hydration during each day. Individual variations in body sizes, metabolic rates and activity levels mean that some people should drink more water every day than others.

Portion Size

Foods in the bottom section of the pyramid may be eaten in larger amounts and more frequently. The pyramid's upper sections portion sizes and frequency of consumption are smaller.

Healthy Lifestyle Habits

Like daily physical activity are important for overall good health. This includes strenuous exercise like running, fast dancing, hiking at a brisk pace, and aerobics, as well as walking, housework, yardwork, or taking the stairs instead of the elevator. Meals in the company of others are what make the meal enjoyable.

What are the Pros and Cons of the Mediterranean Diet?

Pros- It offers varied flavors and food options and covers all major food groups: low in saturated fats (most of the fats in this diet are monounsaturated or "good" fats); it's heart healthy and is a diet that you can stay with for a lifetime. It also has a lower sodium intake due to the reduction of processed foods.

Cons- Some of these diets don't include milk or dairy products other than cheese, yogurt and Greek yogurt. Because of this pay attention to your calcium and magnesium levels. Many vegetables are good sources of calcium like: seeds, cheese, yogurt, sardines, beans, almonds, whey protein and some leafy greens. Vegetables high in magnesium are: Avocados, legumes, spinach, and cashews. If you really like milk, add skim milk to your diet; you may have lower levels of iron so eat foods rich in iron and vitamin C, which help your body absorb iron. Foods high in vitamin C are: sweet yellow peppers, cherries, rose hips, chili peppers, papaya, strawberries, parsley, kale, kiwi, broccoli, lemon, guava, oranges, and brussels sprouts. Red wine is part of the diet. Consumption of wine may not be advisable for people taking certain medications and those with elevated triglycerides or who have pancreatitis. This diet does not state exact serving amounts per day, but rather lists total amount of macronutrient distribution, which is confusing

for people. For example, the diet uses words such as “Low to moderate intake”, “Abundance”, and “Often”, which doesn’t give exact amounts. A good of thumb is to listen to your stomach. Eat when you feel hungry and eat until you are satisfied but not stuffed.

What should I eat?

Try to consume an average of at least 1 gram of omega-3 fatty acids per day. Omega-3s are a type of fat that provides a number of cardiovascular benefits. Here is a list of foods with omega-3s in them:

Fish (3 ounce cooked portion)

Pickled herring (1.2 grams)

Salmon (1.1 grams)

Mackerel (1.0 grams)

Trout (0.5-1.7 grams)

Canned tuna, white, in water

Canned tuna, light, in water

Halibut (.4 grams)

Shrimp (.3 grams)

Cod (.3 grams)

Oils (1 tablespoon)

Flaxseed oil (1 T = 7.0 grams)

Walnut oil (1.4 grams)

Olive oil (.1 gram)

Flaxseeds can be found at many bulk food and health food stores. Ground flaxseed provides more nutritional benefits than whole seed. Grind flaxseeds at home using a coffee grinder, food processor, or blender. You can store whole flaxseeds at room temperature for up to a year but to keep the best flavor and taste it is best to grind whole flaxseeds as you need them. After grinding, refrigerate in an airtight, opaque container. Ground flaxseed handled this way will keep for up to 90 days.

Nuts & Seeds (1 ounce)

Flaxseed, ground (1 T = 2.0 grams)

Walnuts, English (1.9 grams)

Walnut, black (.9 grams)

Beans

Soybeans, boiled (1 C = 1.0 grams)

Tofu (½ C = .4 grams)

Sample Menu List for Seven Days

Day One

Breakfast: 1 cup cooked oatmeal, ½ cup sliced strawberries, 1 cup Skim Milk

Morning Snack: 8 oz. low-fat yogurt, 2 Tablespoon Flaxseed, ground

Lunch: 1½ cups Split Pea Chowder (page 6), 2 cups chopped salad (page 11), 1 Sliced tomato, 1 slice Whole grain garlic toast (page 6)

Afternoon Snack: 1 oz. (1/4 cup) Almonds, 1 Pear

Dinner: 4 oz. Baked Salmon, 1 cup Herb & Garlic Potatoes (page 7), 1 cup Garden Vegetable Medley (page 7)

Day Two

Breakfast: ¾ cup Flax Cereal or Multibran Cereal, 1 cup Skim Milk, ½ cup Blueberries

Morning Snack: 8 oz. low-fat yogurt, ½ cup Strawberries

Lunch: 2 cups Bean Soup (page 7), 5 whole grain low fat crackers, 1 cup tossed salad (pages 7 & 8), 1 oz. (1/3 cup) chopped pecans

Dinner: 1 serving Chicken Fajita Bowl (page 8)

Evening Snack: 1/3 cup dry roasted peanuts, without salt

Day Three

Breakfast: 1 cup cooked oatmeal, 2 Tablespoons chopped walnuts or ground flaxseeds, 1 cup Skim Milk, 1 banana

Morning Snack: 1/3 cup almonds

Lunch: 1 serving Chicken salad with Vinaigrette (page 8), 1 whole wheat roll, 1 teaspoon Canola margarine

Afternoon Snack: 1 sliced kiwi

Dinner: 1 cup cooked penne or other small shaped pasta, 1 cup Black Bean Marinara Sauce (pages 8 & 9), ½ cup steamed spinach (page 9), 1 cup raw carrots, 1 teaspoon Canola margarine

Evening Snack: 6 oz. nonfat yogurt, ½ cup frozen thawed blueberries

Day Four

Breakfast: 1 Spanish-Style Frittata (page 9), 1 slice whole wheat toast, 1 teaspoon Canola margarine, 1 cup fresh melon, 1 cup Skim Milk

Morning Snack: 1 orange, 14 (1oz.) walnut halves

Lunch: 1 Turkey sandwich (page 9), 1 cup tossed salad (pages 7 & 8), 1 apple

Afternoon Snack: 1 pear

Dinner: 2 cups Spinach stir-fry (pages 9 & 10), 1 cup brown rice

Evening Snack: 1 cup Strawberry Smoothie (page 10), add 2 tablespoons wheat germ or ground flaxseeds

Day Five

Breakfast: 1 cup Wheatena or other whole grain hot cereal (follow box directions & omit salt) – top with: 1 cup Skim Milk, 2 Tablespoons walnuts, chopped, ½ grapefruit

Morning Snack: 8 oz. low-fat yogurt, 2 Tablespoons wheat germ

Lunch: 1 Dagwood Veggie Burger (page 10), 1 cup carrot sticks

Dinner: 1 ½ cups Mexican Minestrone (page 10), 2 cups chopped salad (pages 10 & 11), 1 whole wheat roll, 1 teaspoon Canola margarine, 1 cup spiced Winter Squash (page 11)

Evening Snack: Fruit Salad (page 11)

Day Six

Breakfast: Vegetable Omelet (page 11), 1 sliced whole grain toast, 1 teaspoon Canola Margarine, 1 cup Skim Milk

Morning Snack: 1 Pear

Lunch: 1 Tuna Sandwich (page 11), 1 cup tossed salad (page 7 & 8)

Afternoon Snack: 1 Orange, 1 oz. Low-Fat String Cheese

Dinner: 1 6 oz. Salmon steak broiled, 1 cup Broccoli, steamed, 1 small Whole Grain Roll, 1 cup tossed salad (page 7 & 8)

Evening Snack: 1 Baked Apple

Day Seven

Breakfast: 1 Whole Grain Muffin (pages 11 & 12), 1 cup Skim Milk, 1 Orange

Morning Snack: 14 halves (1 oz.) Walnuts

Lunch: 1 serving Easy Salmon Salad (page 12), 1 Whole Wheat Roll, 1 teaspoon Canola margarine, 1 Pear

Afternoon Snack: 1 Whole grain WASA crackers or other whole grain crackers, 2 Tablespoon unsalted old-fashioned peanut butter

Dinner: 1 cup Vegetarian Chili Pot (page 12), 2 Tablespoon Nonfat sour cream, 1 cup Easy Slaw (page 12)

Evening Snack: 1 cup Peach Smoothie (page 12)

Recipes**Slow Cooker Mediterranean Chicken**

1/3 cup white wine

2 tablespoons brown sugar

1½ teaspoon dried oregano

3 tablespoon red wine vinegar

Salt & pepper

6 garlic cloves, smashed

1 tablespoon capers

½ cup prunes

1/3 cup pitted green olives

4 small chicken legs and 4 thighs (about 2 ½ pounds)

¼ cup fresh flat-leaf parsley, chopped

1 cup long grain white rice

To a 5-6 quart slow cooker, add wine, brown sugar, oregano, vinegar, ¼ teaspoon salt and pepper; whisk together. Add garlic, capers, prunes and olives; mix. Add chicken, nestling it among olives and prunes. Cover slow cooker with lid and cook on low 5 to 6 hours or on high 3 to 4 hours. Gently stir in parsley. Thirty minutes before serving, cook rice according to package directions. Serve chicken, prunes, olives and sauce over rice. Serves 4.

Zucchini Noodles with Marinara Sauce

2-4 large tomatoes, seeded and chopped

1 red bell pepper

1 cup sun-dried tomatoes

1 teaspoon honey

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

2 cloves garlic, crushed

¾ teaspoon sea salt

Pinch of cayenne pepper

2 tablespoons minced fresh basil

2 tablespoons minced fresh oregano

6 medium green zucchini (peeling optional)

Put all ingredients (except olive oil and zucchini) in food processor and blend to chunky or smooth. Put into bowl and mix in olive oil. Transform zucchini into noodles using a spiral slicer. Toss noodles with enough marinara sauce to coat well and serve immediately. Serves 4-6

Split Pea Chowder

1 14-ounce bag dry split peas, sorted and rinsed

1 onion, chopped

1 potato, washed & chopped

3 carrots, peeled & chopped

2 cups low-fat chicken broth

8 cups cold water

1 teaspoon each: thyme, oregano, black pepper

1 bay leaf

Place all ingredients together in a large soup pot. Bring to a boil over high heat then reduce to a low simmer. Cook until peas and veggies are tender, about 1 ½ hours. Remove bay leaf and season with black pepper. Adjust the consistency at the end with more water if needed. Serve hot. Crock pot instructions: Reduce the amount of water to 7 cups. Place all ingredients together in a crock pot and turn heat on high. Cook until peas and veggies are tender, about 4 hours, stirring occasionally. Serve hot. Serves eight. You may freeze leftovers.

Whole grain garlic toast

1 slice whole wheat bread

Canola oil cooking spray

½ teaspoon minced garlic

Sprinkle each of dried oregano, thyme

1 teaspoon parmesan cheese

Preheat oven or toaster over to broil. Place oven rack about 4 to 6 inches from top oven coil. Lightly spray whole grain bread with oil; top with the rest of the ingredients. Broil until lightly golden, about 4 minutes.

Herb & Garlic Roasted Potatoes

8 medium-sized red potatoes (1 pound) cut into chunks

1 teaspoon olive oil

3 garlic cloves, minced

1 teaspoon fresh chopped rosemary

½ teaspoon thyme

Pinch of black pepper

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Toss the potatoes with the rest of the ingredients in a medium-size bowl. Place in a large roasting pan and cover with foil. Roast until potatoes are very tender, about 45 minutes. Serves 4.

Garden Vegetable Medley

¼ cup sliced zucchini

½ cup sliced carrots

½ cup chopped onion

½ teaspoon minced garlic

2 teaspoon honey

½ tablespoon stone ground mustard

½ tablespoon red wine vinegar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place vegetables in small ceramic baking dish. Mix the garlic, honey, mustard and vinegar in a small mixing bowl. Drizzle the mixture over the veggies.

Cover the dish with foil and place in the oven; bake for 15 minutes or until the veggies are tender. Stir and serve hot. Serves 1

Bean Soup

1 pound mixed beans, soaked overnight, rinsed and drained (or use canned beans)

6 cups beef or vegetable broth

2 carrots, peeled & chopped

1 medium onion, chopped

1 tablespoon canola or olive oil

1 large can (28 ounces) whole tomatoes

2 cloves garlic, minced or pressed through a garlic press

½ teaspoon thyme

½ bay leaf

¼ teaspoon hot red pepper flakes

Salt and pepper to taste

Dice carrots and onions and sauté in the oil in a soup pot on medium high until slightly brown and caramelized (about ten minutes). Add beans, tomatoes, broth and seasonings. Simmer for three hours or more. (Two hours if using canned beans). Serves 7.

Tossed Salad

1 cup romaine lettuce, washed, dried and chopped (or use ready to serve from the bag)

½ cup cucumber, diced

¼ cup diced green or red onion

¼ cup sliced carrots

Dressing

1 teaspoon olive or canola oil

2 tablespoon flavored vinegar

Fresh cracked pepper to taste

Pinch dried oregano

Combine all ingredients in a medium-sized mixing bowl and mix well. Serve immediately or chill up to 1 hour before eating. Serves one.

Chicken Fajita Bowl

3 cups cooked brown rice

1 teaspoon canola oil

½ onion, cut in strips

1 cup sliced green pepper strips

1 clove garlic, minced

8 ounces boneless skinless chicken, cut in strips

1 cup cooked or canned kidney beans, drained

½ teaspoon chili powder

½ teaspoon ground cumin

½ teaspoon dried oregano leaves

Garnish with 1 cup nonfat sour cream and 2 Tablespoon fresh chopped cilantro or culantro

Cook brown rice according to package directions, omit salt. For 3 cups of cooked rice you need 1 cup of rice and 2 cups of water. Place vegetable oil in bottom of a large nonstick skillet and heat over medium-high heat. Do not heat oil so hot it smokes. Add onion, green pepper and garlic and sauté until golden, about 2 minutes. Add the chicken strips, beans and seasonings; lower the heat to medium and cook until the chicken is done, about 8 minutes.

Stir occasionally. Serve the fajita mixture over brown rice. Garnish with nonfat sour cream and chopped cilantro. Serves 4.

Chicken Salad with Vinaigrette

3 ounces roasted skinless chicken breast, cubed or cut into shreds

2 cups mixed salad greens

1 carrot, chopped

1 fresh tomato, chopped

½ small avocado, sliced

½ green or red pepper, chopped

Vinaigrette

1 teaspoon olive or canola oil

2 tablespoon flavored vinegar

Prepare salad and toss with vinaigrette.

Black Bean Marinara

1 teaspoon minced garlic

1 cup diced onion

1/3 cup water

1 tablespoon honey

1 tablespoon vinegar

1 15 ounce can black beans, drained and rinsed

1 8 ounce can no-salt-added tomato sauce

1 15 ounce can diced no-salt-added tomatoes

3 ounces tomato paste

½ teaspoon dried oregano

½ teaspoon dried marjoram

½ teaspoon dried basil

Generously spray a large nonstick skillet with cooking oil spray and heat over medium-high. Sauté the onion and garlic until golden, about 1 or 2 minutes. Add the rest of the ingredients and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to simmer and cook until the sauce is thick, about 4 minutes. Serve hot over cooked pasta, baked potatoes or grilled fish. Serves 4.

Steamed Spinach

3 cups fresh spinach

¼ cup sliced green onion

¼ teaspoon olive oil

Black pepper to taste

Pinch nutmeg

Place all ingredients in microwave container. Cook until the spinach is thoroughly heated through. Stir well and serve hot.

Spanish-Style Frittata

½ onion, sliced

2 tomatoes, sliced

2 teaspoon garlic, minced

1 green pepper, sliced

Black pepper to taste

¼ teaspoon crushed dried rosemary

¼ teaspoon thyme

1 teaspoon olive or canola oil

2 cups egg substitute

Preheat broiler. Spread the onion, tomatoes, garlic and green pepper on a large cookie tray so they are in a thin layer. Broil until they are golden brown, about 10 minutes. Remove from the oven, drain off excess juice and add the seasonings. Meanwhile, spray in a large non-stick skillet with olive oil and heat over medium-high heat. Scramble the egg substitute until cooked. Serve with broiled vegetables over top. Serves 4.

Turkey Sandwich

3 ounces sliced skinless roasted turkey breast

1 tablespoon canola mayonnaise

1 large slice lettuce

1 large slice tomato

2 slices whole wheat bread

Spinach Stir-Fry

1 cup cooked brown rice

1½ cups ready-to-serve fresh spinach

½ teaspoon minced garlic

½ teaspoon grated ginger

1 cup frozen stir-fry vegetables

½ tablespoon light soy sauce

2 tsp. canola oil

Pinch cayenne pepper

Place the spinach leaves and cooked brown rice in a large bowl. Generously spray a large nonstick skillet with cooking oil spray and heat over medium-high heat. Sauté the garlic and ginger until golden, about 1 minute. Add the frozen stir fry vegetables and sauté until tender

and heated through, about 4 minutes. Season with soy sauce, canola oil and cayenne pepper. Remove from heat and toss with the fresh spinach leaves and rice. Stir well and serve hot.

Serves 1.

Strawberry Smoothie

½ cup frozen or fresh strawberries

¾ cup vanilla-flavored nonfat yogurt

¼ cup skim or soymilk

½ teaspoon vanilla extract

Combine all ingredients in a blender and puree until smooth. Serve immediately. Serves 1

Dagwood Veggie Burger

1 vegetarian burger patty

1 wheat burger bun

No-salt-added catsup

1 tablespoon canola oil mayonnaise

1 large slice tomato

1 large slice onion

¼ avocado, sliced

¼ cup shredded lettuce

Microwave burger patty on full power until heated through, about 1 minute. Toast burger bun if desired. Assemble burger by placing burger patty and the rest of the ingredients on the bun.

Mexican Minestrone

3 tablespoon macaroni noodles

½ cup low-sodium broth

½ cup water

½ cup kidney beans, rinsed

¼ cup corn kernels

½ cup mixed veggies

¼ teaspoon chili powder

¼ teaspoon garlic powder

¼ teaspoon oregano

¼ teaspoon cumin

Place all ingredients in a medium-sized sauce pan and bring to a boil. Lower heat to a simmer and cook until the macaroni and veggies are tender, about 10 minutes. Stir occasionally.

Serve hot. Microwave directions: place all ingredients in a medium-size microwave container; cook on full power until macaroni and veggies are tender, stirring occasionally.

Serve hot. Serves 1

Chopped Salad

2 teaspoon canola or olive oil

2 tablespoon red wine vinegar

½ tablespoon grated parmesan cheese

¼ cup green bell peppers

¼ cup cooked garbanzo beans, drained

¼ cup shredded romaine lettuce

¼ cup shredded cabbage

¼ cup green onions, sliced

1 radish, sliced

Mix all ingredients together in a medium-size mixing bowl.

Spiced Winter Squash

1 12 ounce box frozen winter squash

Pinch each: cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves

¼ cup reduced calorie syrup

Microwave winter squash on full power until heated through, about 10-12 minutes. Add spices and reduced calorie syrup. Stir and serve hot.

Serves 2

Fruit Salad

1 cup mixed chopped fresh fruit, e.g. orange, melon, berries, bananas, apples, kiwi, pears, peaches, etc. 2 tablespoon orange juice from fresh orange or omit if using orange in above mixture. Combine all ingredients in a medium-sized mixing bowl and mix well. Serve immediately or chill up to 8 hours before eating.

Vegetable Omelet

½ cup zucchini

¼ cup onion

¼ cup green pepper

1 egg

2 egg whites

1 teaspoon canola oil

Heat ½ teaspoon canola oil in small nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add the onions, zucchini and bell peppers; sauté for 7 minutes or until tender. Remove from heat and set aside. Combine the egg whites and egg in a medium bowl; stir well with a wire whisk. Heat ½ teaspoon canola oil in a small nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add ½ of vegetable mixture, spreading over bottom of skillet. Pour egg mixture into skillet and top with remainder of vegetable mixture (do not stir). Cover, reduce heat to medium-low and cook for 10 minutes or until the center is set. Loosen the omelet with a spatula and fold in half. Slide omelet onto plate.

Tuna Sandwich

2 slices whole wheat bread

3 ounces canned tuna, packed in water

2 tablespoon canola oil mayonnaise

1 large slice tomato

1 large slice lettuce

Whole Grain Muffin

½ cup oatmeal

1/3 cup oat bran

1 1/3 cups whole wheat flour

2/3 cup ground flaxseed

2 tablespoon all-purpose flour

2 tablespoon sugar

1 tablespoon baking powder

1/3 teaspoon baking soda

2 cups skim milk

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

½ cup applesauce

½ cup frozen blueberries

Preheat your oven to 375 degrees. Spray a nonstick muffin pan with cooking oil spray and line with paper muffin cups. Combine the dry ingredients in a medium-sized bowl. Place the liquid ingredients in a large bowl and mix well. Add the dry ingredients to the liquid ingredients and mix well. Fold in the blueberries last. Scoop batter into the muffin pan using a third cup measure. Bake immediately at 375 degrees until firm in the center, about 18-20 minutes. Remove pan from oven and turn muffins out onto rack to cool. Yields 1 dozen.

Easy Salmon Salad

7 ounce can pink salmon with bones, no salt

½ cup diced cucumber

3 tablespoon canola oil mayonnaise

¼ cup sliced green onion

2 cups dark green lettuce

2 tomatoes cut in wedges

Toss salmon, cucumber, mayonnaise and green onion together in a large mixing bowl.

Refrigerate until ready to serve, up to 6 hours. Make a bed of lettuce and serve the salmon salad in the middle, garnished with tomatoes.

Serves 2

Vegetarian Chili Pot

1 cup instant brown rice

1 can black beans, drained

1 can diced tomatoes, no-salt-added

1 cup water

3 tablespoon dried minced onion

½ teaspoon chili powder

½ teaspoon oregano

½ teaspoon cumin

Combine all ingredients in a medium-sized microwave container. Cover and microwave on high for 12 minutes. Stir and serve hot.

Serves 3

Easy Slaw

1 cup shredded cabbage (can use prepackaged shredded cabbage to save time)

2 tablespoon vanilla-flavored nonfat light yogurt

1 tablespoon flavored vinegar

½ teaspoon caraway, anise or fennel seeds, crushed

Combine all ingredients in a medium-sized mixing bowl and mix well. Serve immediately or chill up to 8 hours before eating.

Serves 1

Peach Smoothie

1 ¼ cups skim milk

2 tablespoons wheat germ

1 cup fresh or frozen peaches

Pinch cinnamon

Optional: NutraSweet or Equal

Place all items in a blender and blend until smooth.

RESOURCE

Mediterranean Diet Pyramid

<https://www.oldwayspt.org>

Medical News Today (Mediterranean Diet: Facts, health benefits & meal tips

Zucchini Noodles with Marinara Sauce Recipe <https://draxe.com>

LiveStrong.com Pros & Cons of the Mediterranean Diet

<https://www.everydayhealth.com/mediterraneandiet/guide/> Mediterranean Diet-Advantages, Concerns & Effects

<https://mayoclinichealthsystem.org> what's the big deal about the Mediterranean diet

Oldways – Why Traditional Diets?

The Mediterranean Diet: A History of Health

<https://www.helpguide.org> what you need to know about eating Mediterranean way

<https://medlineplus.gov>

<https://www.todaysdietitian.com>

<https://www.nytimes.com> Dr. Ancel Keys obituary

<https://www.mediterraneandiet.com>

<https://www.webmd.com>

<https://mediterraneandiet.com>

Importance of Olive Oil

Mediterranean Diet Pyramid: a lifestyle for today

Improve Heart Health from Pat Stancel from a class she took at Carnival of Learning

Paperwork from Cynthia Gibson

Thanks to Pat Stancel and Cynthia Gibson for the paperwork they sent me and Sue Larson for proof reading the lesson.

